

REMARKS:

Claims 1-13 are pending and stand rejected.

5        Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claims 5 and 6.

Claims 5 and 6 have been cancelled without prejudice.

It is believed no new matter is added by these amendments

35 U.S.C. §112

10        Claims 6 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The limitations of claim 6 have been incorporated into claim 1, making the rejection mute.

15        35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1, 2, and 4-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Dahl et al. (WO 90/15828). The Dahl reference fails to teach Applicant's required amended claim element of a graftable metal salt being added to the fluoropolymer prior to an irradiation step, and therefore fails to present a  
20        *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Dahl

The Dahl reference teaches a graft radiation method for forming a fluoropolymer ionomer by adding grafting monomer to a fluoropolymer and irradiating. The Dahl reference mentions on page 10, lines 23-25 that the stability  
25        of the monomer and grafted products toward radiation is important, but describing stability only in terms of a listing monomers useful in the process.

After the grafted fluoropolymer of the Dahl reference has been formed it can be used in admixtures or compositions with various additives, including antioxidants and stabilizers. (page 13, line 28) There is no teaching or suggestion  
30        in the Dahl reference of Applicant's specific graftable metal salt as a stabilizer that is grafted onto the fluoropolymer.

Rice

The Rice reference is a secondary reference cited for its teaching of sodium  
35        undecylenate as a stabilizer during the vulcanization (crosslinking) of a rubber

latex. The sodium undecylenate is a stabilizer, but is not grafted onto the latex rubber, and no photon or electron radiation is used. Since the Rice reference fails to teach or suggest grafting of a graftable metal stabilizer onto a polymer, it fails to heal the deficiencies of the Dahl reference to teach or suggest all of Applicant's claim limitations.

In view of the above, the Applicant believes that the reasons for rejection have been overcome, and the claims, as amended herein, should be allowable to the Applicant. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance are requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 6/17/10

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